

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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R 140943Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1881

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LENINGRAD 0051

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINR, UR

SUBJECT: GRIGORIY VASIL'YEVICH ROMANOV: PROFILE OF AN EXECUTIVE

REF: 75 LENINGRAD 1512

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. CONGEN SOURCES CONTINUE TO TALK UP PROSPECTS OF ADVANCEMENT AT 25TH PARTY CONGRESS OF GRIGORIY VASIL'YEVICH ROMANOV, FIRST SECRETARY OF LENINGRAD OBLAST' PARTY ORGANIZATION AND CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO. THIS MESSAGE AIMS AT SKETCHING A PROFILE OF ROMANOV BASED ON CONVERSATIONS WITH OFFICIALS, OUR PERIODIC CONTACTS WITH HIM AT VARIOUS PROTOCOL FUNCTIONS AND CONSUL GENERAL'S OFFICIAL CALL ON ROMANOV ON JULY 3, 1975. IN SUM, ROMANOV IS AN IMPRESSIVE INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS RISEN IN THE LENINGRAD PARTY LEADERSHIP, AND BECAME A CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO, LARGELY DUE TO HIS INTELLIGENCE, INNOVATIONS, AND ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITIES. OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT HE WOULD BE A VERY EFFECTIVE LEADER AT THE CENTRAL LEVEL AND WE TEND TO BELIEVE THAT IF HE DOES BECOME A FULL MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO AT THE PARTY CONGRESS HE MAY ALSO GIVE UP HIS LENINGRAD CONSTITUENCY IN ORDER TO ASSUME CENTRAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE PARTY OR GOVERNMENT APPARATUS.
END SUMMARY.

2. GRIGORIY VASIL'YEVICH ROMANOV, AGE 52, IN MANY WAYS TYPIFIES THE REBIRTH OF THE LENINGRAD PARTY ORGANIZATION FOLLOWING ITS TIME OF TROUBLES DURING THE STALIN ERA. INDEED, ONE MAY ROUGHLY DATE THE BEGINNING OF ROMANOV'S PARTY CAREER WITH STALIN'S DEATH SINCE ROMANOV TOOK UP FULL-TIME PARTY WORK IN 1954 AFTER
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WORKING IN THE LENINGRAD SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY. ROMANOV IS FOND OF HARKING BACK TO HIS "SHIPBUILDER DAYS" AND THE FACT THAT HE IS AN OLD GRAD OF THE LENINGRAD SHIPBUILDING INSTITUTE. A RECAP OF ROMANOV'S PROGRESSION IN THE LENINGRAD PARTY ORGANIZATION

SHOWS THAT THE PARTY KEPT HIM ENTIRELY WITHIN ITS CLUB UNTIL HIS CULMINATING APPOINTMENT AS OBLAST' FIRST SECRETARY. THERE WERE NONE OF THE LATERAL DETAILS TO CITY OR OBLAST' GOVERNMENT POSTS THAT MARK THE CAREERS OF MOST OTHER LEADING MEMBERS OF THE PRESENT LENINGRAD PARTY ORGANIZATION. ROMANOV'S FIRST PRINCIPAL POSITION IN THE LENINGRAD PARTY STRUCTURE WAS THE FIRST SECRETARYSHIP OF THE KIROV RAYON PARTY COMMITTEE. HE HELD THIS POSITION FROM 1957 UNTIL 1961, WHEN HE BECAME A SECRETARY OF THE LENINGRAD CITY PARTY COMMITTEE (GORKOM). AFTER A SHORT FIFTEEN MONTHS IN THIS POSITION, HE BECAME A SECRETARY OF THE OBLAST' PARTY COMMITTEE (OBKOM) IN 1962 AND ADVANCED TO THE OBKOM SECOND SECRETARYSHIP IN DECEMBER 1964 AFTER SERVING AS THE SECOND SECRETARY OF THE SHORT-LIVED OBLAST' INDUSTRIAL PARTY COMMITTEE (JANUARY 1963 TO DECEMBER 1964). ROMANOV BECAME A VOTING MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE IN 1966, THE ONLY OBKOM SECOND SECRETARY THEN TO ACHIEVE THIS STATUS. ROMANOV ACHIEVED THE FINAL RUNG OF THE LENINGRAD PARTY LADDER -- THAT OF OBKOM FIRST SECRETARY -- IN SEPTEMBER 1970. FINALLY, HE BECAME A CANDIDATE MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO IN APRIL 1973, THE YOUNGEST PERSON AMONG ITS MAKEUP OF FULL AND CANDIDATE MEMBERS.

3. ROMANOV IS A PRAGMATIC, BUSINESS-MINDED MANAGER OF PEOPLE AND PROGRAMS. CONGEN SOURCES HAVE NOTED THAT HIS ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITIES ARE CONSISTENTLY APPLIED TOWARD IMPROVING THE COORDINATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PARALLEN PARTY/GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE OF THE ECONOMY. ALTHOUGH A PARTY BUREAUCRAT BY DEFINITION, ROMANOV HAS A REPUTATION FOR SEEKING SOLUTIONS WITH PRACTICAL MEASURES THAT CAN CUT THROUGH THE BAST BUREAUCRACIES OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM AND GET RESULTS. ONE GETS THE IMPRESSION THAT ROMANOV, ALTHOUGH IDEOLOGICALLY PURE, IS NOT AN IDEOLOGUE WHO PERMITS HIMSELF OR OTHERS TO SACRIFICE INNOVATION TO BUREAUCRATIC AND POLITICAL SHIBBOLETHS. HE NOTICEABLY LACKS THE STIFFNESS AND FORMALISM THAT CHARACTERIZE SO MANY PARTY APPARATCHIKS. ROMANOV COMES ACROSS IN CONVERSATION AS A MAN FULLY CONFIDENT OF HIS OWN WORTH, BUT WITHOUT CONCEIT AND WITHOUT BEING EITHER ARROGANT OR DEFENSIVE ABOUT HIS POSITION IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS. HE APPEARS TO BE REGARDED WITH GENUINE
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AFFECTION AMONG LENINGRAD OFFICIALS, MOST OF WHOM EXPRESS RESPECT FOR HIS "HUMAN" QUALITIES AS WELL AS HIS MANAGERIAL ABILITIES. ROMANOV IS AN ABLE CONVERSATIONALIST WHO GIVES THE CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT HE IS THINKING AHEAD AS HE SPEAKS. HE IS PROBABLY A VERY CAPABLE PROTAGONIST AMONG SUPERIORS AS WELL AS EQUALS AND OUR GUESS WOULD BE THAT HE IS AN EFFECTIVE PARTICIPANT, ALBEIT NON-VOTING, IN POLITBURO SESSIONS AND OTHER TOP CONCLAVES.

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4. ROMANOV MAY BE A MAN FROM THE PROVINCES, BUT HE IS DEFINITELY NOT PAROCHIAL. HE APPEARS TO HAVE A KEEN INTEREST IN WORLD AFFAIRS, WELL-INFORMED WITHIN THE SOVIET MEANING OF THE WORD, AND IS AT COMPLETE EASE WITH FOREIGNERS. HE WAS ESPECIALLY IMPRESSIVE, WE ARE TOLD, DURING WILLY BRANDT'S VISIT TO LENINGRAD, ONE OF THE VERY FEW OCCASIONS ROMANOV HAS PLAYED A LEADING ROLE IN HOSTING VISITING FOREIGN DIGNITARIES FROM THE WEST. ROMANOV DELIBERATELY AVOIDS THE LENINGRAD DIPLOMATIC CIRCUIT EXCEPT FOR NATIONAL DAY AND MAY DAY FESTIVITIES, BUT BEGAN SOME TWO YEARS AGO TO RECEIVE ACCREDITED HEADS OF CONSULAR ESTABLISHMENTS IN LENINGRAD ON OFFICIAL CALLS. ROMANOV IS NO STRANGER TO FOREIGN PARTS. HE HAS TRAVELED ABROAD RATHER FREQUENTLY AND DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS HEADED THE CPSU DELEGATIONS WHICH WENT TO FRANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNUAL L'HUMANITE HOLIDAYS. HIS MOST RECENT TRIP ABROAD WAS TO CUBA, ATTENDING THE CUBAN PARTY CONGRESS; HE HAD PREVIOUSLY ACCOMPANIED THE BREZHNEV PARTY TO CUBA. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ROMANOV WOULD FIND HIMSELF OUT OF HIS DEPTH IF HE ASSUMED CENTRAL RESPONSIBILITIES THAT INVOLVED HIM IN PROTOCOL CONTACTS OR NEGOTIATIONS WITH FOREIGN LEADERS. HIS REPORTED INSISTENCE ON BEING IN COMMAND OF HIS FACTS WOULD MAKE HIM A SHREWD AND EFFECTIVE CENTRAL FIGURE IF HE RECEIVES SUCH ADVANCEMENT.

5. OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT THE CENTRAL APPARATUS IN MOSCOW COULD USE A MAN OF ROMANOV'S PROVEN ABILITIES AT THE CENTER ITSELF. THE CURRENT SPATE OF ECONOMIC ILLS OR, AT ANY RATE, THE POINT OF DEPARTURE REPRESENTED BY THE 10TH FIVE YEAR PLAN, MAKES IT AN OPPORTUNE JUNCTURE TO UTILIZE ROMANOV'S MANAGERIAL ABILITIES IN A SPHERE WIDER THAN THAT OF LENINGRAD OBLAST'. WHETHER OR NOT
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THE LONG-STANDING GERIATRIC SYSTEM IS READY FOR NEW BLOOD, THE FACT IS THAT ROMANOV REPRESENTS THAT WHICH THE PARTY IS ALWAYS PREACHING ABOUT: MANAGERS WHO WILL USE EVERY RESOURCE TO ACHIEVE THEIR TASKS EFFECTIVELY AND "SCIENTIFICALLY." THIS IS THE VERY IMAGE WHICH ROMANOV PROJECTS. HE IS CREDITED WITH DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING THE CONCEPTS OF INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS AND COMPLEX SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PLANNING ON A REGIONAL BASIS, APPROACHES WHICH HAVE BEEN ADOPTED AS THE STANDARD ELSEWHERE. HE

IS ALSO CONSIDERED TO BE THE AUTHOR OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES WHICH WILL INSURE A "WORTHY REPLENISHMENT" OF THE DECREASING LABOR RESERVES OF THE SOVIET UNION. DURING THE PAST YEAR, LENINGRAD SUCCESSES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS AGRICULTURAL BASE HAVE RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE MENTION IN THE CONTEXT OF MEASURES TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY IN THE NON-BLACK EARTH ZONE OF THE RSFSR. FINALLY, ROMANOV IS REPORTEDLY "PRO-COMPUTER" IN HIS APPROACH TO ACHIEVING HIGHER PRODUCTION LEVELS AND RATIONALIZING THE ADMITTED DEFICIENCIES OF THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM. IN SHORT, HE IS CREDITED WITH BEING FORWARD THINKING AND INNOVATIVE, TRAITS WHICH THE SOVIET BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM CAN SORELY USE.

6. CONGEN DOES NOT PRESUME TO PREDICT THE SOVIET SYSTEM'S CAPACITY TO ADVANCE A YOUNGSTER LIKE ROMANOV TO THE TOP LEVEL. HOWEVER, OUR SOURCES HERE ARE BETTING ON HIS ADVANCEMENT SINCE THEY CONSIDER HIM CHOICE NUMBER ONE WHEN THE SYSTEM IS READY TO ACCEPT THE NEW BLOOD WHICH IT NEEDS. WE BELIEVE ROMANOV WOULD BE AN EFFECTIVE LEADER AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL AND, IN TERMS OF DEALING WITH SOMEONE OF PRAGMATISM AND INTELLIGENCE, HE WOULD BE MORE FORTHCOMING THAN MANY PRODUCTS OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM.

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